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Do We Teach Disciplines or Do We Teach Students?—What Difference Does It Make?

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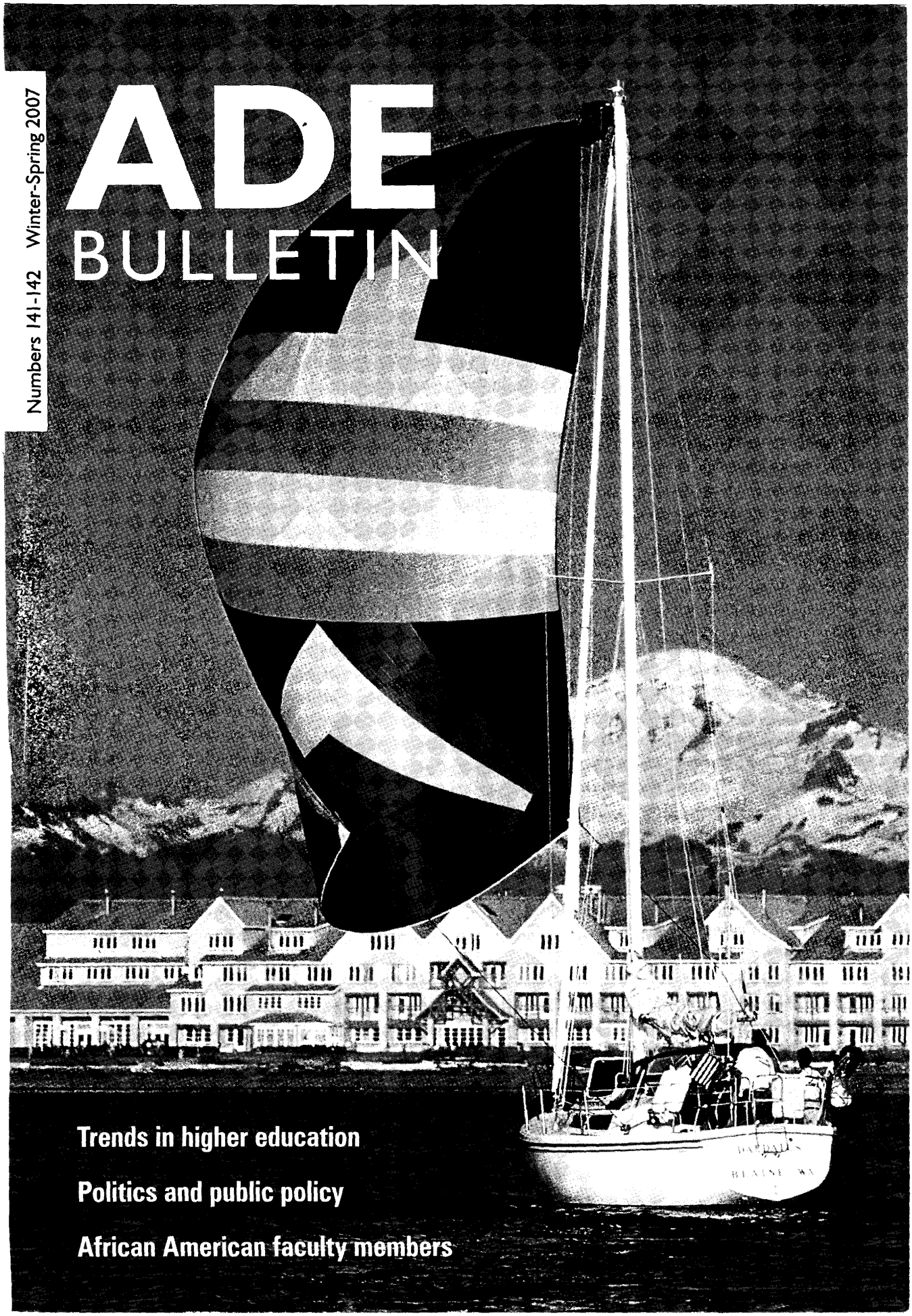

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Do We Teach Disciplines or Do We Teach Students? What Difference Does It Make?

MARSHALL GREGORY

DURING my time at the University of Chicago as a graduate student, the professors running the graduate program never hinted at my true destiny, by which I mean my destiny as a teacher. In an *ADE Bulletin* of 1994, I characterized the way my generation of graduate students was socialized into academe, and what I said then seems a good entry into my topic now.

> As a student deeply immersed in nineteenth-century British studies and literary criticism, I certainly expected at the end of my doctoral labors to be effortlessly translated, like Enoch, into a higher kind of academic heaven-haven, levitated up and out of my library carrel at Chicago, hurtled toward success down [an] acoustically lined tube, and gently lowered into another library carrel at good old Research U, presumably in a beautiful city with a good symphony and affordable housing, where I would be a faculty member adored by a handful of student researchers who would hang breathlessly on each of my well-polished, professionally impeccable words. (20)

The only use I can now think to make of this absurd vision of an academic career is to offer it up for ridicule on *Saturday Night Live* or *The Daily Show* or maybe offer it to the shade of Aristophanes for a brisk send-up. In partial justification for my naïveté, however, I can truthfully report that my revered professors at the University of Chicago actually encouraged this absurd vision, and none of them ever alluded to the fact that my real destiny, like Adam's, was to be driven from the paradise of my carrel by an angel with a flaming sword. When the sword angel finally dragged me by the heels out of my fifth-floor library paradise, my fingernails making long, agonized scratches on the concrete floor, he did not send me, as he sent Adam, to toil in the real-world dirt of Mesopotamia. He sent me to toil in real-world classrooms in Milwaukee instead.

That I did not expect this fate was—and is—irrelevant. If there is one thing literary study teaches us, it's that we all fulfill our destinies whether we're talking about Achilles or Frodo. Accordingly, I found myself standing one day, feeling awkward and dazed, in front of my first 8:00 a.m. freshman composition class (yes, in Milwaukee), realizing with the mounting panic of a prisoner walking up the steps to the gallows that I knew a lot about literature—at least I thought I knew a lot about literature—but that I did not know one blessed thing about composition, about teaching composition, about teaching literature, or about teaching in general. This was the first moment I really understood—and I understood it viscerally—that there was a huge unspanned chasm between what graduate school had trained me to do and what my job required me to do.

It got my attention. Some academics of my generation took their version of this experience as a good reason to bypass classrooms as much as possible in favor of doing library or laboratory research. Others of us, however, once over the shock of finding that we were totally unprepared, became fascinated by the complex dynamics of this unexpected classroom dimension to our careers. Professors like me chose a career path directed straight toward the heart of classroom experience. I have been deeply interested in teaching, both as prac-

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tice and as scholarship, ever since, and I still think teaching is the most interesting and challenging game in town. Few graduate programs today leave students as unprepared for teaching as the graduate program I took in the 1960s—I walked into my first class with not even five minutes of teaching experience and with not even five seconds of teaching talk as part of my graduate education. But the fact that today's graduate students are not totally unprepared for teaching does not mean that that are well prepared for teaching.

The single most difficult notion for graduate students and new professors to grasp about teaching—and, indeed, many experienced teachers never grasp this point either—is that successful teaching to undergraduates has little to do with the degree of one's mastery of disciplinary knowledge. I am not making the well-rehearsed point that there is a big difference between knowing disciplinary information and knowing how to teach it. I am making a different point and, I hope, a deeper one. Allow me to illustrate my point, like Socrates, starting with my own ignorance. After diligent study in my field that began with voracious childhood reading, followed by a college English major and a PhD in English, I think that by now, at age sixty-six, I may know about ten percent of all the disciplinary knowledge available to me. Actually, that's an optimistic estimate, but for purposes of argument and diminishment of embarrassment, let's assume that it's true. (It's hard to keep up with the output of Harold Bloom alone, much less find the time to fill in my chagrined ignorance of Schiller, Rabelais, Henry Gates, the spasmodic poets, and David Foster Wallace.) If you are like me, every time you look at your must-read list, you feel the onset of heart attack symptoms. Your should-read list could stretch to Tokyo. But my students are even worse off. They probably learn no more than ten percent of the disciplinary knowledge that I introduce to them in my classes, and if you think they remember ten percent of that ten percent six months after they leave my classes, you're the kind of person who buys ten lottery tickets every single day on the grounds that someone has to win.

The point I am making is that given all there is to learn in any field, we are all pikers, stumblers, and terminal beginners. But while I am aware of the huge blank spaces of ignorance in my learning, my students are not aware of those blank spaces, and they nibble like mice around the edges of what I don't know and often mistake me for a vastly learned man. They say so in their course evaluation forms. "Dr. Gregory knows everything about literature and literary criticism." "Yeah?," I want to say, "and you would be measuring my knowledge against what standard?" In undergraduate teaching, we are all doing no more than dabbling around the edges of a vast pool of knowledge and information that not even we as experts claim to digest, an observation that invites the following conclusion. If we are all getting so little disciplinary work done and if undergraduate teaching does actually work a fair amount of the time, it cannot be because we are all doing a box office business expanding the boundaries of our students' disciplinary knowledge. It has to be working for reasons other than disciplinary reasons.

I will tell you why and when teaching works, and doing so will bring me back to my claim that good undergraduate teaching correlates poorly with anyone's having mastered massive amounts of disciplinary information. When undergraduate teaching works, it works because the disciplinary material we teach—the same material that inevitably gets forgotten—endures a better fate than getting remembered. (Remember that I am only talking here about good teaching, teaching that works, not about teaching that fails.) A thing's merely getting remembered is not a good criterion of its value because, if we stop to think about it, we all remember, for reasons we can never explain, a whole attic full of useful rubbish. A better fate than a thing's getting remembered is its getting absorbed. When a thing gets absorbed, it may not be recallable later as stored information, any more than the toast you had for breakfast this morning is recallable as toast, but the nutritional value of the toast makes its contribution to your life even when it is no longer toast, and the things that our students forget but absorb from our classes also become transformed. Knowledge that gets absorbed shows up not as knowledge but as features of mind and character that are much more valuable than mere information. Information we can always look up, but when a thing gets absorbed it turns into ideas and skills, and it turns into forms of socialization and cognition that shape students' intuitions and that strengthen their powers of language, imagination, judgment, and reasoning.

In short, when teaching works, it forms ethos, for what else *is* ethos if not the particular configuration

of anyone's intuitions and our powers of language, imagination, judgment, and reasoning? Students absorb from us ideas, imaginings, judgments, and forms of reasoning because we model how these components of ethos may be used. Talking about imagination does not teach anyone how to jumpstart his or her imaginative powers. But as we model in our teaching how imagination may be used, we do teach others how to use their imagination with greater fecundity and vividness. The literature classroom is our exercise field for demonstrating how to use ideas, how to develop imagination, how to construct judgments, and how to argue using reason.

For reasons we can all understand and sympathize with, these are not the kinds of thoughts waving for attention in the foreground of graduate students' and new professors' minds. At the beginning point of their careers, most teachers are insecure about their mastery of content, about their authority in front of a classroom full of adolescents, and about how to fill each class period with content that is well informed and well developed. They are not thinking about student ethos; they are wondering how to explain Coleridge's notion of multiety in unity or Eliot's notion of tradition or Foucault's notion of the episteme. In short, the training of graduate students and new professors is pretty much guaranteed to produce teachers who think it is their duty to teach undergraduates the way their graduate professors have taught them. This is the kind of teaching that graduate students themselves have been experiencing, many of them for seven or eight years. Why would this kind of teaching not seem the natural model for graduate students' or new professors' teaching?

Two things need to be said about this "natural" model, however. First, it is a model for training apprentices to become professional colleagues, not for educating undergraduates in the liberal arts. Second, it is a model that could hardly be more dysfunctional for undergraduate education. Most of the undergraduates we face wind up occupying professional worlds far removed from academe, but even when new teachers do pause to consider that few of their students are headed for academic careers, they tend to approach teaching as disciplinary apprenticeship anyway. Given their own recent and protracted graduate education, this is the only approach to teaching that they are intimately familiar with. "How can I not be a good teacher if I really know my stuff?" they are inclined to think, and they are even more inclined toward the obverse version of this claim, thinking that "surely, knowing my stuff really well will at least protect me from being a bad teacher." And they will persist in their inclination toward these beliefs although everyone in his or her education encounters at least one—and sometimes, unfortunately, more than one—professor who is a true expert in his or her field but who may as well be a penguin when it comes to teaching effectively.

All this means that before graduate students become new assistant professors, they need to think about several salient considerations deriving from the powerful instinct to conflate good teaching and a maximum coverage of disciplinary knowledge. Despite the extent to which this conflation misleads teachers, the confused notion that most of teaching is wrapped up in how well one knows one's material is a pernicious influence on undergraduate education, and new teachers need to become unconfused about it before they can become effective. Let me try to demonstrate how serious this issue is.

When anyone asks an academic, "What do you teach?" the academic invariably gives a disciplinary answer. "What do I teach, you ask? I teach nineteenth-century British literature," or "I teach ancient philosophy," or "I teach calculus." The disciplinary answer about what one teaches is overwhelmingly familiar, but, in fact, its familiarity masks the fact that, measured logically, it's a very strange answer. Decades ago in our discipline we learned how to deconstruct and how to ferret out the biases in the language that we use in scholarship and criticism, but it is equally important to learn how to deconstruct the langue of our pedagogy, and, frankly, we are a long way from doing this well. It was once not strange to explain the causes of mental or emotional disorders as demonic possession, but the discovery of viruses and bacteria and brain chemicals made demonic explanations disappear. There's a parallelism here. The mindset indicated by "I teach literature" or "I teach discipline X" is as strange in its way as the claim that demons cause fever because, in fact, we know as certainly as we know that demons don't cause fever that teachers do not teach disciplines. Teachers teach students, not disciplines, and the difference to a teacher, not to mention the difference to students, of describing his or her function in either

of these ways is the difference between two entirely different orientations toward teaching.

I am not stretching to make an arcane point. If it seems that I am obtusely or falsely dramatizing a trivial matter of social rhetoric, let me remind everyone that it was our discipline that first taught other disciplines to understand that conventions of social rhetoric often mask large subterranean structures of value and belief, the power of which goes unchallenged as long as the structures lie mostly unseen. It was disciplinarians in English who taught everyone else how to analyze the structures of patriarchal privilege buried in what used to be taken as matters of mere social rhetoric, such as the erasure of women's individuality that occurs inside the convention of sending formal invitations to married couples using only the husband's name—my wife and I still occasionally get wedding invitations addressed to "Dr. and Mrs. Marshall Gregory," as if my in-laws had been too thoughtless to give their daughter a name—or the dismissal of the female point of view accomplished by the long-standing social convention, the loss of which is still lamented by many, of using *man* as a synonym for *human being.*

On critical examination, it turned out that these mere conventions of social rhetoric were in fact not mere, and not innocent, either. Those who objected to placing these conventions under critical scrutiny always have had and always do have a typical ploy of resistance. It goes without saying, they assert, that a wife has her own personhood, despite the erasure of it by certain forms of address, and it likewise goes without saying, they continue, that *man* as a synonym for *human being* covers women as well. However, we have learned by now, or should have learned by now, that whatever meanings are asserted as so obvious that they can "go without saying" are exactly the meanings that need to be said.

Thus when I criticize the social convention of teachers saying, "I teach philosophy" or "I teach English," it does not strike me as a plausible rejoinder—nor does it convince me of the innocence of such descriptive locutions—that the convention can be defended by responding that it goes without saying that all teaching is as concerned with students as it is with disciplines. The subterranean value structure of "I teach English" describes a classroom mindset that is focused primarily on the discipline—in a way that probably seems defensible to the teacher as mere common sense or as mere shorthand—rather than on students. Academics are not generally hypocrites on this front. They do not say, "I teach English" rather than "I teach students" because they are trying to pull the wool over anyone's eyes. They say, "I teach English" because no one has yet helped them think through their teaching mission, and in this sense their professional self-description *is* a bit innocent, but it is certainly no more innocent than the innocence of the patriarch to whom it never occurred that using *man* as a synonym for *human being* might constitute a teensy privileging of the male perspective.

So what difference does it make if grad students and new professors think of themselves as teaching students first and disciplines second? If it didn't make a difference, talking about it would be more of a bother than a help, but it makes a world of difference in the teacher's entire orientation to the classroom. The classroom world in which teachers think of themselves as primarily teaching students is a different classroom world from the one in which teachers think of themselves as primarily teaching disciplines.

When teachers think of themselves as teaching students first, they are more prepared to understand both the intellectual rationale and the everyday utility of meeting students where they are rather than endlessly whining about students not being adequately prepared. One of the commonest and silliest themes of informal academic discourse is teachers' glazed-eyed cliché about how terrible it is that students today are not prepared for college-level work. It is egregious nonsense that so many teachers derive a kind of self-back-patting comfort or construct a kind of bogus self-satisfaction by characterizing students as inadequately prepared, especially since the very people against whom we often enjoy contrasting ourselves, the denizens of market-focused boardrooms whom we often scorn as having no life of the mind, are at least intelligent enough not to avail themselves of this flimsy excuse.

Corporate moguls driven by market values do not criticize their customers for not being adequately prepared. They study hard how to meet their customer's needs or how to educate their customers about needs that they as market agents would like to meet. Then, beginning where the customer is, they undertake to move the customer to look desirously, appreciatively, or admiringly at

the goods they offer. Only teachers awash in delusions of superiority to their students have the effrontery to walk into their classrooms and think it a shameful injury to themselves that students aren't ready to join them in disciplinary high jinks right off the bat. If more professors would pat themselves less and start looking in a hard-headed, clear-eyed, empirical manner at their students' needs, they might see that they are the ones starting off on the wrong mark, not their students.

I am making a strong argument about this point because there is no community more toxic to the professional socialization of graduate students and new professors than the community of professors bonded together by the belief that students are not adequately prepared. This community is toxic because new professors seduced by its appeal inoculate themselves against either self-inquiry or student criticism for the rest of their career. Just as Wonder Woman deflects a volley of bullets with her magic bracelets, the professor who begins a teaching career with the expectation that few students will be prepared arms himself or herself with a magical deflection of all self-blame for any teaching failures. All problems with teaching will always be the fault of the unprepared student.

A second difference it makes when teachers think of themselves as teaching students first is that they become much more receptive to the crucial fact that the most important cluster of variables affecting students' learning in the classroom are ethical and social variables, not intellectual or professional variables. Teaching is a lot of activities that most teachers focus on diligently, such as description, exposition, explanation, time management, use of technology, testing, evaluation, and so on. But there is an additional cluster of variables more important than any of these that many teachers hardly think about at all. Whatever else teaching is, it is also an ethical and social relationship, and if teachers do not know how to tend to the social and ethical dimensions of teaching, they can, sadly, undermine their own best intentions and efforts.

On the ethical front, students evaluate every teacher from nearly the first moment he or she walks through the classroom door on the first day of any semester. This evaluation kicks into gear on four fronts that have nothing to do with how well the teacher knows his or her disciplinary content. Students evaluate teachers on fairness, respect, charity, and civility, and the teacher who fails on any of these fronts, especially fairness, will be fighting an uphill battle all the way because he or she will be working against an ethical deficit of discredit. That a teacher whom students evaluate low on ethical fronts may be a true expert in the field will never erase students' low opinion. Ethical assessment precedes and trumps academic and intellectual assessment.

On the social front, every graduate student and every new teacher needs to keep in mind that students may remember little content from class but are likely to remember a lot about the teacher as a personality and as a social agent. Teachers may think that the classes they teach are about chemistry or literature, and they are, but teachers need to remember that every class is also about the teacher—or at least about the teacher's embodiment of certain values—and any teacher who fails to realize this is not a full participant even in his or her own classroom. I have spoken to hundreds of former students who, when they talk about their former teachers, never mention anything they learned in *any* class. That always shocks me, but it never varies. Decades after taking a class, however, many students will remember their teachers' temperaments, habits, manner of speaking, passions, enthusiasms (or lack thereof), and personal interactions. All graduate students and new professors need to consider that who they are as persons is a whole dimension of teaching in itself and is perhaps the most important influence on student learning.

A third difference it makes when teachers think of themselves as teaching students first is that they become amenable to the reality that while most of the content they teach will be forgotten (just as most of the content that everyone learns is forgotten), the effects of learning do not merely evaporate. An old but true adage about education says that education is what remains when everything you learned has been forgotten. The truth of this adage helps us focus on the reality that I now want to probe more deeply: the reality that when content is really learned, it gets absorbed, not stored. We only remember stored information when we continue to use it and thus reinforce it. We remember absorbed information all our lives because what gets absorbed does not have to be recalled. Instead, it changes the interior architecture of thinking itself, which means that it becomes part of the mind's structure, not carried about as part of the mind's burden.

The lists that you, I, and our students have learned over the years to make ourselves look smart on tests and papers are rigged with built-in self-destruct mechanisms just like the destruction mechanisms that destroy each list of tasks at the beginning of *Mission Impossible* episodes. Sure, I still remember from elementary and high school classes that the sun is ninety-three million miles from the earth, that the speed of light is 186,000 miles per second, and that Milton was forty-two when he went blind, but such an array of random facts is more like a neural accident than useful memory. No one has ever asked me if I know the speed of light or how old Milton was when he lost his sight. We all have facts like these stuck in our heads, and the same is true of our students. Later in students' lives (like next semester), after they have taken our classes, the course content they studied with us may no longer be recallable as information. But if the class provided a real learning experience, the students' struggle with our assigned content will have turned into something deeper than information. It will have turned into new habits of reasoning, speaking, writing, and imagining.

A fourth difference it makes when teachers think of themselves as teaching students first is that they are more likely to see that what is interesting to them will almost always be separated from what is important to their students by a large gulf of mutual incomprehension that only grows wider as teachers grow older. Many teachers focused primarily on their disciplines never see the difference between what is interesting to them and what is important to their students. It's a bit narcissistic not to see this, but, as the Duke says in *Amadeus*, "there it is." Teachers who are actively and empirically engaged with their students, however, will realize, eventually, that if they want what is interesting to them to become important to their students, they have to explain to them why it's important and they have to do so in concrete terms and in the present tense, not in some vague future that students can hardly imagine.

A fifth difference that surfaces when teachers think of themselves as teaching students first is that they find it easier to understand the coded nature of students' complaints about course content. The teacher focused on disciplinary content gets frustrated and sometimes offended when students express what sounds like hostile resistance or contempt for the teacher's beloved content. Teachers who are empirically trying to judge where their students are in their learning stages, however, more easily keep in mind that when students complain about a classroom assignment, saying, "this is stupid," what they generally mean is, "this makes me feel stupid." "This is stupid" or "this is boring" is code for "I'm afraid I can't do this. Can you help me understand this assignment in a way that will allow me to do well on it?" The teacher's job is to support students' efforts to acquire the confidence they need to take risks.

A sixth difference that occurs when teachers think of themselves as teaching students first is that they are better at modeling good learning for their students than are teachers whose attention is riveted by content. What teachers are likely to think of as modeling good learning for their students is probably not, because, typically, teachers are profoundly averse to modeling for students the messy, ragged parts of learning—the parts where we once made a fool of ourselves or failed the statistics course or were rejected by an editor or were jealous of others or just said something plainly stupid. All of us are tempted to present an airbrushed, marketer's image of ourselves as flawless learners, but teachers who spend more time looking hard at students than at disciplinary content will be more likely to see that such a presentation of themselves is one of the most discouraging and diminishing things they can do to their students. We owe students the truth. In the pursuit of real learning, failure is an off-and-on certainty for everyone but is seldom fatal for anyone.

Teaching, as Bartlett Giamatti has said, "is an instinctual art, mindful of potential, craving of realizations" (194). Such an art does not allow for rules or directions that work with mechanistic certitude: "Use a torque wrench at 65 pounds of pressure to bolt Idea A into Student B's brain." Directing regular teaching seminars over many years at my home institution, Butler University, and at my second academic home, Emory University, has forced on me the truth of my three concluding points. First, talking to many teachers in intense conversations has made me realize the extent to which teachers are often too busy teaching to engage in sustained thinking about it. This is why we all need to gather round our watering holes and talk about teaching as much as we talk about scholarship. Second, directing teaching seminars has also made me optimistic about how readily we may all improve what

we do by sharing what we know. Many college professors get frustrated with teaching, but only a few descend to terminal cynicism. Given genuine support for thinking afresh about teaching, especially in the company of peers, most teachers not only seize the opportunity but run with it.

Third, and finally, I would like the chance to tell all graduate students and new professors that a career devoted to teaching can be a noble, sustaining, and deeply satisfying choice of life, not merely a utilitarian maximization, as some economists might say, of certain bodies of knowledge and investments of talent. Sentimental and melodramatic clichés about teachers, such as the Mr. Chips stereotype 3 and the Professor Snape stereotype 4—also heroic clichés, such as the music teacher in *Mr. Holland's Opus* or the literature teacher in *Dead Poet's Society*—swirl so thickly in our culture that it is difficult for young teachers to get a fix on who they should be and how they should comport themselves. I would recommend to them that they get their bearings not by focusing on pop culture narrative and certainly not by focusing on personal advancement but by concentrating on the needs of their students. Those needs are great and teachers are in a position to exert a positive influence, an influence needed now more than ever before.

The need is great because when it comes to the teaching of desire, college and university teachers are being outtaught as if we were the Seem Team playing the Dream Team, and the people outteaching us are corporation marketers. The *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter* movies have recently reanimated wizards in our imagination as figures of great power, but these fictional wizards are pikers compared with today's corporate marketers. What makes them so powerful is that they know how to manipulate their magical spells and incantations in order to make all of us desire not just to have certain consumer products but to be certain kinds of people. Marketers know how to make us want a certain kind of life, and there is nothing more important to the kind of life we actually live than the kind of life we are taught to want. Teachers often have the sense that their teaching lies on the surface, while evidence all around us suggests that the pedagogy of corporate marketers goes right to the core of our students' lives.

It is sad to realize that our college students inhabit a social, moral, and political space that is so deficient in the helpful cues, prompts, exercise, and stimulation that they need for the balanced development of those capacities that lie at the heart of their humanity. In referring to such capacities I do not refer to notions highly theorized or highly scientific. I refer to those basic capacities that seem to belong to human beings as such, primarily derived from the fact that all human beings have a common brain structure and a common evolutionary history and universally live in groups. The human capacities that seem to issue from these three determinants are the capacities for reason, language, imagination, introspection, moral and ethical deliberation, sociability, aesthetic responsiveness, and physicality.

On all these fronts our society fails young people on a massive scale every day. Their imaginations are rendered passive by the ingestion of images that threaten to overwhelm us all, images that are almost hallucinatory in their vividness and intensity and, in movie houses, are nearly the size of Texas. All these images come ready-made, however, and are thus inadequate for the stimulation of an independent, constructive imagination. On the language front, our students' linguistic capacity receives profoundly inadequate stimulation in a society more and more dependent on icons and images rather than arguments and poetry and narration, leaving students less and less aware of the satisfactions and successes, not to mention the nuances and precision, that can be achieved by getting the right words in the right order for purposes of either self-expression or public appeal.

Right down the list of capacities I just enumerated, young people are not simply left alone—far from it; in some senses they would be better off if they were left alone—but more and more manipulated by mass media and market forces. Their sexual energy is exploited and ramped up to sell a vast array of consumer goods; their natural curiosity and desire to learn are short-circuited by educational narratives ranging from *Animal House* to *Harry Potter* to *Paper Chase* to *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* that tell them that school is dull and that teachers are either stupid, mean, or come from hell; and their desire to be mature is infantilized by a television culture that tells them that the unflappable, ironic, David Letterman and Jon Stewart version of cool is the only kind of maturity that counts. Worst of all, market forces have mastered the rhetoric of autonomy and freedom that we would like to use with our students but that is difficult for us to redeem from the corruptions of language that

conflate autonomy with mindless partisanship and freedom with nothing more than the power to purchase a wide range of consumer goods.

Where are the contexts, the social spaces, where students are likely to find models of people who know how to bring trained intelligence, intellectual honesty, clear expression, aesthetic sensitivity, and ethical responsibility to the solution of problems both personal and social? Where are the social sites today where young people are likely to find serious people asking questions about serious issues, yet conducting their pursuit of these issues by means of companionable, civilized, and respectful discourse? Such contexts are few indeed, but our university and college classrooms can be such places because we can choose to make them so. I would like the chance to tell every graduate student and every new professor that when they walk to the door of their classroom on any given day, close it, and turn to their class of students, no one in the world has more unfettered power for the next fifty or seventy-five minutes than *they* do for speaking directly to students' minds and hearts in ways that can potentially influence how those students think, feel, and judge for the rest of their lives. Every day I feel the thrill and the responsibility of this challenge. It is a job worth getting up for every day. It is a job worth doing as long as one can do it well.

I want to tell graduate students and new professors that the real aim of teaching is not helping students rivet the juggernaut of careerism onto the framework of their young lives. The real aim of teaching is helping students acquire such capacities of mind and heart as will assist them in living lives that are autonomous, personally enriched, socially responsible, intellectually perspicuous, and morally defensible. This is not an aim that pays well, but it is a noble and sustaining activity. It is a task to which a man or woman can dedicate an entire life and not feel hoodwinked at the end. However, the only way we veterans in the profession empower our graduate students and young professors to turn around and empower their students to live these kinds of lives is to live them ourselves, especially inside the domain of education, where we should exert our best efforts to think clearly about not only what we do but what we want.

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